

# *Senior Cuban Diplomat Says Ongoing Process between Washington and Havana Paves the Way to Resolving Bilateral Pending Issues*

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Havana, July 20 (RHC)-- Josefina Vidal, General Director for the United States at the Cuban Foreign Ministry said that the ongoing negotiations process between the United States and Cuba represents a unique opportunity to advance toward resolving bilateral pending issues and Cuba's development.

In an interview published in Wednesday's edition of the Cuban newspaper Granma, Vidal refers to achievements made over the past twelve months since the official reestablishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. She said that both the U.S. and Cuba could benefit significantly from bilateral cooperation in areas of mutual interest. In that sense, she noted that the two countries have already signed 10 cooperation accords and similar documents are currently under negotiations in areas like the

fight against drug trafficking, law enforcement, search and rescue operations, response to oil spills in the Gulf of Mexico, meteorology, seismic activities, protected areas and biodiversity conservation.

In the economic and trade field, the Cuban diplomat lamented that agreements signed thus far between Cuban and U.S. companies focus on such areas as telecommunications, hotel management and cruise ship operations, based on the limited scope of the measures adopted by the Barack Obama administration to modify aspects of the U.S. blockade.

Josefina Vidal stressed that the lifting of the blockade is essential to advance toward the full normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba.

Regarding the upcoming presidential elections in the United States, the Cuban diplomat stressed that Cuba and the world expect that whoever gets elected will act in accordance with the expressed will of the vast majority of the American people, who favor the current course of U.S. policy towards Cuba.

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